

PART 2039 - CHANGE OF OFFICIAL STATION

Subpart A - Change of Official Station

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Sec.</u>		<u>Page</u>
2039.1	General.	1
	(a) Authority.	1
	(b) General provisions.	1
2039.2	- 2039.3 [Reserved]	2
2039.4	Travel to seek residence quarters.	2
2039.5	Subsistence while occupying temporary quarters.	2
2039.6	Allowance for expenses incurred in connection with residence transactions.	3
2039.7	[Reserved]	3
2039.8	Transportation and temporary storage of household goods and personal effects.	3
2039.9	- 2039.11 [Reserved]	7
2039.12	Relocation Services Program (RSP).	7
2039.13	Vouchers and supporting data.	8
2039.14	- 2039.50 [Reserved]	8

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PART 2039 - CHANGE OF OFFICIAL STATION

Subpart A - Change of Official Station

§2039.1 General.

This Instruction states policies and procedures for authorizing expenses in connection with permanent change of official station, and for receiving payment for allowable expenses. The Federal Travel Regulations (FTRs) and the Agriculture Travel Regulations (ATRs) are available in each Rural Economic and Community Development (RECD) field office. This Instruction is a supplement to those regulations.

(a) Authority. The officials responsible for authorizing transfers and allowable expenses are:

(1) State Directors and the Assistant Controller, Finance Office, will authorize transfers in their jurisdiction. They will issue and approve Forms AD-202, "Travel Authorization/Advance," and AD-202R, "Attachment for Relocation Travel." This authority can be redelegated.

(2) The Director, Support Services Division, will issue Forms AD-202 and AD-202R for transfers coming to the National Office. This authority can be redelegated. Each staff leader will authorize their respective transfers.

(b) General provisions. When employees have equal qualifications for a position, consideration is given to the selection of the one whose transfer involves less expense to the Government.

(1) Employees must sign the computer-generated service agreement on Form AD-202R and complete Form RD 2039-3, "GSA Real Estate Transfer Disclosure Statement," as applicable, before the official change of station is authorized and expenses paid.

(i) Employees must work for the Government for 12 months after the effective date of the transfer, unless separated for reasons beyond their control and acceptable to RECD.

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RD Instruction 2039-A
§2039.1(b)(1) (Con.)

(ii) Employees are liable for the full amount of transfer expenses paid by the Government if there is a violation of the service agreement.

(iii) The respective Agency Administrator must approve in writing the cancellation of obligation under paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section.

(2) The obligation under paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section is for the transfer shown in the service agreement. The obligation is not voided by a prior transfer nor in connection with a second transfer.

(3) File a complete set of travel orders, Forms AD-202 and AD-202R, in the employee's official travel folder.

§§2039.2 - 2039.3 [Reserved]

§2039.4 Travel to seek residence quarters.

(a) Househunting trips are not automatic entitlements. They may be authorized at the discretion of the approving official.

(b) Refer to §2039.5(b) for deduction of days from the first 30-day period of temporary quarters.

§2039.5 Subsistence while occupying temporary quarters.

(a) Extension of time for temporary quarters are outlined in the FTRs and ATRs, Chapter 302-5.2.

(1) When an employee does not participate in the Relocation Services Program (RSP) (see §2039.12 of this Instruction) and needs additional time in temporary quarters beyond the initial 60 days, the employee must submit a written request for extension of time to their servicing travel office. An administrative level higher than the one who authorized the initial 60 days must approve the extension. The employee's request and State Office's recommendation for any additional time beyond 90 days are forwarded for review to the National Office, Travel Unit. The Travel Unit submits requests to the respective Administrator's Office for final approval.

§2039.5(a) (Con.)

(2) When an employee participates in the RSP and needs an additional 30-day extension, the justification for extension must be for compelling reasons, deemed beyond the employee's control, that occurred during the initial 30 days. The employee's request and State Office's recommendation are forwarded for review to the National Office, Travel Unit. The Travel Unit submits requests to the respective Administrator's Office for final approval. This authority CANNOT be redelegated.

(b) Days spent on a househunting trip shall be deducted from the first 30-day period of temporary quarters.

§2039.6 Allowance for expenses incurred in connection with residence transactions.

(a) Extension of time for real estate are outlined in the FTRs and ATRs, Chapter 302-6.1(e).

(b) Extensions are approved by State Directors for field employees; the Assistant Controller, Finance Office, for Finance Office employees; and the Director, Support Services Division, for National Office employees.

(c) The applicable office must receive the written justification for an extension of time no later than 30 calendar days after the expiration of the initial 2-year time limitation.

§2039.7 [Reserved]

§2039.8 Transportation and temporary storage of household goods and personal effects.

(a) Transportation and temporary storage of household goods and personal effects are outlined in the FTRs and ATRs, Chapter 302-8.

(b) RECD will pay for the shipment and storage of up to 18,000 pounds of the employee's household goods and personal effects.

(c) There are two methods of moving the employee's household goods:

(1) Actual Expense

(2) Commuted Rate

(d) The State, Finance, and National Offices are responsible for administering the General Services Administration's (GSAs) Centralized Household Goods Traffic Management Program for their employees.

(e) State, Finance, and National Offices will use GSAs electronic MUFFIN system to extract a "Cost Comparison for Shipping Household Goods." If an office does not have access to the MUFFIN system, the office will mail to GSAs regional office, at least 10 days in advance, Form GSA 2485, "Cost Comparison for Shipping Household Goods." Review the cost comparison to determine if the actual expense method will result in lower costs to the Government. If the difference between the commuted rate and the lowest cost carrier is less than \$100, then the commuted rate is selected. The travel coordinator in each office will decide how household goods are shipped after review of the cost comparison. Offices may use Form RD 2039-2, "Information for Household Goods Shipment Via GBL," for the cost comparison.

(f) Forms AD-202 and AD-202R will show which moving method is used for the transfer.

(g) Guidelines for the "actual expense" and "commuted rate" moving methods.

(1) Actual expense method. The actual expense method is further divided into the following two methods.

(i) "U.S. Government Bill of Lading" (GBL), Standard Form (SF)-1103.

(A) The receiving office will: select the carrier, arrange for the service, prepare the GBL, and assist employees in claiming any loss or damage; use carriers which provide the most effective service at the lowest cost; and pay the actual costs of packing, unpacking, shipping, delivering, and storing the household goods, plus accessorial services.

(B) Each State, Finance, and National Office will prepare a GBL. Instructions for completing Forms SF-1103 and SF-1200, "Government Bill of Lading Correction Notice," are found in the Forms Manual Inserts (FMI).

§2039.8(g)(1)(i)(B) (Con.)

(1) Carrier's liability insurance: When RECD ships household goods by GBL, the respective office will counsel the employee regarding the amount of insurance required for the shipment and storage of the employee's belongings. The employee must disclose in writing to the mover any individual item(s) with a value greater than \$100 per lb. Otherwise, the mover is liable for only \$100 per lb., per item. RECD offers a liability insurance plan that has two parts:

(i) The first part is fully paid by RECD at no cost to the employee. It is called Full Value Protection Service. Its valuation is based on: \$3.50 x the actual total weight of household goods (e.g., \$3.50 x 10,000 lbs = \$35,000 RECD valuation).

(ii) The second part is optional to the employee at additional cost. Its valuation is based on: The employee's independent appraisal if higher than RECD's valuation (e.g., \$40,000 independent appraisal). Cost to the employee = \$0.85 x each \$100 of excess valuation above what RECD allows (e.g., \$40,000 - \$35,000 = \$5,000 excess valuation). Employee's cost to the National Finance Center (NFC) will be \$5,000/100 = 50; and 50 x \$0.85 = \$42.50).

Note: If the employee stores goods under the optional coverage part of the plan (see above par. (ii)), the respective office notifies the employee that his/her added cost to NFC is \$0.18 per \$100 of excess valuation (e.g., \$5,000/100 = 50; and 50 x \$0.18 = \$9.00).

(2) Filing claims.

(i) If the employee has loss or damage to household goods or personal effects, the employee must file the claim with the carrier. Settlement is based on the full replacement value of the item. The Government defines the full replacement value of any individual item to be the cost to replace the item, with similar quality, at existing market price.

(ii) If the employee still feels inadequately compensated after the claim is filed against the carrier, the employee can file a claim against the Government under the provisions of the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims (MPCE) Act of 1964. The complete filing instructions are found in Department Regulation (DR) 2510-1.

(iii) The employee must file Form AD-382, "Employee Claim for Loss or Damage to Personal Property," to the respective Travel Office. Attach a copy of communications with the carrier, receipts, canceled checks, appraised value of damaged items, and cost to repair or replace the item(s). If the employee relocated to an office in a State, each State Director has authority to approve the AD-382. If the employee relocated to the Finance or National Office, the respective Agency Administrator has authority to approve the AD-382. After the State Director or Agency Administrator approves the AD-382, then the applicable "Certifying Official" will process Form AD-757, "Miscellaneous Payment System," and mail to the NFC for payment.

(ii) Do-it-yourself.

(A) If the employee decides to move some or all of his/her household goods via rental truck, trailer, or car, etc., the employee will be reimbursed for the actual costs, (e.g., truck rental, material handling equipment, packing materials, gasoline, oil, toll charges, etc.), not to exceed what it would have cost RECD to move the employee by the lowest cost carrier listed on the GSA cost comparison. The employee's labor or the labor of other family members is not reimbursable. The employee must furnish weight tickets for the vehicle, one for the unloaded vehicle with full tank of gas and one for the fully loaded vehicle with full tank of gas. Receipts are required for truck rental, weight tickets, equipment, packing material, etc., in order for NFC to reimburse the employee.

§2039.8(g)(1)(ii) (Con.)

(B) If the employee uses his/her privately owned vehicle to carry the household goods on his/her travel to the new duty station, employee will not be reimbursed for vehicle expense, since the employee will have a mileage allowance. Receipts are required for material handling equipment, packing materials, etc., in order for NFC to reimburse the employee.

Note: Temporary storage.

The employee's household goods and personal effects using the GBL and "do-it-yourself" methods may be stored for up to 90 days at RECD expense. The employee may be authorized an additional 90 days storage after a written request to the respective RECD Travel Office is received. Once an extension for 90 days has been approved for a total of 180 days storage, no further extensions can be granted for any reason.

For reimbursement of a "do-it-yourself" method, the employee must obtain weight certificates or itemized warehouse receipts.

(2) Commuted rate method. The employee will make his/her own arrangements for transportation, accessorial services, and storage with the mover. The employee may move the household goods him/herself or use a commercial moving company. The employee will pay the moving company directly and is solely responsible for settling any claims with the mover. The employee is reimbursed on the basis of the shipment's weight and distance traveled. The reimbursement is computed on the basis of the Commuted Rate Schedule. The employee must obtain an original receipt from the mover showing payment to support the expense claim.

§§2039.9 - 2039.11 [Reserved]

§2039.12 Relocation Services Program (RSP).

(a) Participation in the RSP are outlined in the FTRs and ATRs, Chapter 302-12.

(b) Each employee must indicate the use of the RSP in writing, and must read the information about the RSP provided in the relocation package. The employee must submit a written statement, either accepting or declining participation in RSP, with the service agreement. Attach the statement to the Forms AD-202 and AD-202R. If the employee decides not to use the RSP, the Agency will not provide this service for the same move at a later date.

(c) Each applicable travel office will counsel and enter the transferring employee in the RSP. The office will submit invoices for the sale of residence or services rendered according to the NFC Travel System Procedures, Title II, Voucher and Invoice Payments Manual, Chapter 2, Travel and Transportation Payments, Section 1, Travel System.

(d) The employee's reimbursement for temporary quarters subsistence for themselves and their family is limited to a maximum of 30 days when the home purchase service portion of relocation services has been authorized. The respective Agency Administrator must approve any exceptions to this policy. This authority CANNOT be redelegated.

§2039.13 Vouchers and supporting data.

Claims for reimbursement. Claims for reimbursement are made on Form AD-616R, "Travel Voucher (Relocation)." Claims must show each expense and must be supported by receipts, forms, and statements. The detailed instructions are found in NFC Travel System Procedures, Title II; Voucher and Invoice Payments Manual; Chapter 2, Travel and Transportation Payments; Section 1, Travel System.

§§2039.14 - 2039.50 [Reserved]

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